

**Statement of Congressman Christopher H. Smith, Chairman
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International
Operations**

**“Modern-Day Slavery: Spotlight on the 2006 Trafficking in Persons
Report, Forced Labor, and Sex Trafficking at the World Cup”
June 14, 2006**

Good morning. The Subcommittee will today hear expert testimony concerning the scourge of human trafficking – modern day slavery.

The U.S. Government estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 women, children and men are bought and sold across international borders each year and exploited through forced labor or commercial sex exploitation, and potentially millions more are trafficked internally within the borders of countries. Eighty percent of the victims are women and girls. An estimated 14,500 to 17,500 foreign citizens are trafficked into the United States each year.

And now we know well that many American girls and young women – many of whom start out as “runaways” – are bought, sold, abused, and raped throughout the United States.

(To combat the exploitation of Americans, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2005 not only requires the Attorney General to conduct prevalence studies of sex trafficking and unlawful commercial sex acts in the U.S. but the new law requires both the Secretary of Health and Human

Services and the Attorney General to prepare reports on best practices to reduce demand. For the first time, the new law also authorizes \$20 million for a Health and Human Services grants program for U.S. victims, \$10 million for long-term residential treatment facilities and provides \$50 million for a new grants program for state and local law enforcement.)

Today's hearing will focus on the findings in the State Department's sixth annual *Trafficking in Persons Report*, with a focus on progress made and on the significant challenges ahead.

The Committee is privileged to have as our special guest Julia Ormond in her capacity as the UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Abolition of Slavery and Human Trafficking.

Ms. Ormond has traveled to Ghana, India, Cambodia, and Thailand to raise awareness about the horrors of human trafficking. Ms. Ormond has been a leader on a number of humanitarian issues including AIDS and refugee issues. She is the founding Chair of Film Aid International and is well known for her film roles in numerous movies including "Legends of the Fall," "Sabrina," "First Knight," "Barber of Siberia" and many others. Ms.

Ormond is also the Executive Producer of the 1996 Emmy award-winning documentary “Calling of the Ghosts,” a story about two women in Bosnia, caught in war where rape was as much an everyday weapon as bullets and bombs. We are extremely honored and privileged to have her with us today.

This is also the second of a two-part series of hearings on sex trafficking in connection with the World Cup soccer championship.

(http://wwwc.house.gov/international_relations/afhear.htm)

The traffickers who use and abuse human beings as commodities to be bought and sold must be tracked down, their nefarious operations crushed and the individuals who commit these heinous crimes sent to jail for a long, long time. All profits derived from selling women and children into slavery must be seized and put to good use like providing some semblance of restitution to the victims or for the construction of shelters.

The TIP report itself is mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), which I sponsored and which was signed into law in October 2000. In 2003, I sponsored a reauthorization and expansion of that Act which also became law, and, on January 10, 2006,

President Bush signed into law my third anti-trafficking bill—the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005.

These pieces of legislation have created a comprehensive framework for combating trafficking in persons abroad, the trafficking of foreign nationals into the United States, and the domestic trafficking of our own citizens. As a result, the United States has become a leader in addressing this human rights violation and encouraging other governments to do the same.

Since taking office, the Bush Administration has devoted more than \$400 million to combat trafficking in more than 149 countries. The new law authorizes an additional \$361 over two years to expand these efforts. Across the globe, governments are taking action to prevent trafficking, to prosecute the exploiters, and to give hope and restoration to those victimized by trafficking. With 4,700 convictions worldwide this year alone, the heinous crime of trafficking is at long last being punished. In the last two years alone, convictions have topped 7,700. Because a significant portion of U.S. foreign assistance is now contingent on whether a nation is meeting basic minimum standards specifically prescribed in the three TPVAs to prevent

trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers, 41 countries in the last year alone have passed tough new laws to end this modern day slavery. Shelters have been set up for victims. NGOs and faith communities have reached out to help heal survivors of trafficking.

I applaud Ambassador John Miller for keeping trafficking in the forefront of our human rights agenda and for the progress we are making. I also welcome the emphasis on forced labor in this year's report. Forced labor, in which people are enslaved and exploited for purposes of labor often within their own countries, is infrequently mentioned but affects anywhere from 4 to 27 million people worldwide. In places such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Brazil, Jordan, Kuwait, and Taiwan – all ranked as Tier 3 or on the Tier 2 Watch List in this year's Report – foreign migrant workers or these countries' own citizens are trapped and held in slave-like working conditions. Not only must the victims be freed and properly compensated; their employers must be held responsible and forced labor punished as the heinous crime it is.

While the TIP report is good -- the best yet I would submit -- I am nevertheless disappointed that the State Department has again failed to place

India on Tier 3 with other government who are not making significant anti-trafficking efforts. Millions of men, women, and children, predominantly from India's Dalit caste, are in debt bondage and face involuntary servitude in brick kilns, rice mills, and zari embroidery factories. India's placement on the Tier 2 Watch List for the third consecutive year, despite its failure to create a national law enforcement response to the crime of trafficking, and its blatant unwillingness to address the massive problems of bonded labor and trafficking-related corruption, reeks of political considerations within the State Department overriding the facts about human trafficking. The Watch List was created by my legislation to send a clear warning and enable egregious offenders to make specific reforms. It's not a place to hide our friends who fail to make real improvements.

It is also deeply troubling that while some countries not only turn a blind eye to trafficking others embrace inhumane policies that actually facilitate or encourage the very crime they profess to abhor.

Athletes and fans are gathering in Germany for one of the premiere, world-wide sporting events of our day, the 2006 FIFA World Cup, which opened last Friday. Over the course of one month at 12 venues throughout

Germany, national soccer teams will be competing. Millions of fans will join in the festivities. For most soccer fans like myself, this quadrennial event is the showcase of world class athleticism and teamwork. But, looming in its shadow is the very real threat that the World Cup matches have become a catalyst and magnet for sex trafficking into Germany. Those that work with victims report that trafficking for the so-called sex industry often heightens during major sports events. In Germany, the problem is exacerbated by the legalization of prostitution.

Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, secretary of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, in a June 8th interview, observed that in Germany, many women are forced into prostitution. "This is a fundamental human rights violation," he said. "Women have become market commodities, which can be bought. And they cost less than a ticket for a football match."

For the last year, the German Government has prepared for the World Cup, coordinating security efforts with all neighboring countries, and attending to the myriad of details associated with such major international events. Traffickers have also worked overtime to exploit this opportunity to

improve their illicit revenues through the expected rise in demand in the so-called “sex industry.”

Sadly, this is not idle speculation. AFP reported over the weekend that police in Latvia arrested a man suspected of selling at least six women to German brothels. Latvian and German police collaborated in a month-long investigation in which the suspect allegedly paid his friends 100 euros for each woman found. He, in turn, was paid 400 euros per woman by the German brothel.

We will hear testimony today from two women who have traveled from Russia to tell us about their horrific experiences being trafficked to Germany. Ms. Masha Gnezdilova (NEZ-DIL-OH-VAH) and Ms. Irina Veselykh (VEZ-EL-KAH) were deceived by offers of non-existent jobs in Germany, their passports seized, beaten, raped, and forced to work as prostitutes, controlled by the Russian mafia.

During the February meeting in Vienna, as Head of the U.S. Delegation and as Special Representative on Human Trafficking for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I vigorously raised concerns about the

trafficking prevention efforts for the World Cup. I was joined by other European parliamentarians who were sobered by the expectation that, especially since the matches are being held in Germany which legalized pimping and prostitution in 2001, the World Cup fans would be legally free to rape women in brothels or even in mobile units designed specifically for this form of exploitation. Of the approximately 400,000 prostitutes in Germany, it is estimated that 75 percent of those who are abused in these houses of prostitution are foreigners, many from Central and Eastern Europe.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act requires the State Department to analyze and report annually on the efforts of governments to combat trafficking in persons around the world. Germany received a Tier 1 rating again this year—meaning that the Government is meeting minimum standards to combat trafficking. Frankly, the German Government has done some good work to identify and protect victims of trafficking and to prosecute their exploiters. And yet, these efforts are at odds with its laws on legalized prostitution, and in some cases the facilitation of prostitution by local governments, which provides direct and indirect sanction for sex trafficking.

Legalized prostitution is not a policy that the German Government has to embrace. I am aware that the German Government is supporting public awareness efforts regarding trafficking for forced prostitution in the context of the World Cup. This is a somewhat absurd effort given that the legalized prostitution infrastructure is gearing up to expand its capacity during the World Cup and there is every reason to believe that the “new recruits” will be trafficked women and girls. I see this as flagrant state complicity in promoting sex trafficking. I believe Germany can do much more to prevent the sexual exploitation of women and children by attacking the demand that fuels this problem.

It is time for Chancellor Merkel to take a stand and speak out against the exploitation of women and children in the name of sport. I would encourage her government to turn the tables—beginning now with the World Cup—by committing to reverse Germany’s laws on prostitution.

In this regard, on June 9th I introduced House Resolution 860, calling on the Government of Germany to take immediate action to combat sex trafficking in connection with the 2006 FIFA World Cup. I ask that my Colleagues expeditiously support and move this bill forward to the House

floor. As the world's attention is turned to soccer, those committed to ending the tragedy of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation will be watching how Germany protects the most vulnerable.

Finally, let me say a few words about the prevention of trafficking by armed forces. In response to evils such as the sexual exploitation of young women and girls by UN peacekeepers in the Congo – some as young as 11 or 12, and in exchange for a banana or a dollar – the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 includes provisions requiring the US government to press international organizations to do more in this area. Section 104(e)(1) requires the annual trafficking report to include information on measures taken by the UN, NATO, OSCE, and other similar bodies to prevent trafficking, and I am pleased to see the inclusion of such information in this year's report. Section 104(e)(2) requires a report by the Secretary of State at least 15 days prior to voting for a new or reauthorized peacekeeping mission which describes measures taken by the international organization to prevent trafficking and analyzes their effectiveness. I have not seen any such reports by the Department to date, and would ask for a clarification of where we are on this.

In conclusion, I look forward to hearing the testimony of all of our distinguished witnesses who have a vast amount of experience with these and other international trafficking issues. I now yield to my good friend and colleague from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, for his opening statement.